

news release



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STATEMENT CONCERNING JOB TERMINATION OF MALCOLM STONE

Following is a statement by Stirling Dorrance, assistant to the rector:

"On Tuesday, February 17, I met with Malcolm Stone and gave him a letter informing him that the position of Director of Information was being eliminated and that effective that date his services with the University would no longer be required. The contents of that letter having become a matter of public knowledge, I feel that clarification of some points covered in it should be made.

"That the fact of Malcolm's position having been eliminated came as a shock to him I have no doubt; I can think of no way in which such an action could be taken without having this effect. That the information came as a surprise, however, I seriously question.

"Over a period of one and half years that the Information Office has been my responsibility, innumerable meetings, discussions, exchanges of memos, and the rest have taken place all aimed at the organization and operation of an effective information service on a university-wide basis.

"No member of staff, and particularly Malcolm in his senior position, can have been honestly unaware that unless certain effects could be accomplished, serious modifications in the office's operation, including the elimination of positions, was a distinct possibility. The action I took a week ago was therefore not an isolated or summary action.

"While, therefore, there may be other ways in which Malcolm could have been informed, I am still unable to think of a better, or a softer, way.

"The matter of severance considerations I left deliberately unclear in my letter for the simple reason that I could not be sure what was possible. I was anxious that, within reason, the severance should be as generous as possible. Current University policy in the matter did not offer an adequate severance consideration applicable to this situation -- it provides for one month's salary plus other considerations.

"Immediately following my extremely brief meeting with Malcolm I requested, and was prepared to insist on, six months salary severance plus other considerations. My recommendation was accepted as fair and a cheque covering the amount was immediately drawn and was made available to Malcolm the same day without regard for any action he might contemplate or take. The cheque remains available.

"The matter of why I chose to make the severance date February 17 rather than at some future date is perhaps arguable but not, I think, substantial. I took this course in the light of the best advice I could find as a means of providing the best handling for all sides. If this was not the best way I have yet to be told an alternative that is an improvement.

"As far as the question of a salary increase prior to severance is concerned, I took the view that Malcolm was clearly entitled to it along with all members of my staff. I was questioned on whether or not this would not be deemed a "merit" increase. I took the view that it was not and that Malcolm was fully entitled to it. I sought an interpretation and my view was upheld."

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